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"THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

IN his new book *The Time Has Come* Padre Herbert Leggate caustically remarks that "it is plain silly to talk about the Kingdom of God if we do not know what we mean by the phrase." He poses for us such questions as "Is it something that exists in another World? Is it something that will one day exist here? Does it exist here and now? Is it possible to answer Yes to each of these questions? If so, where are we? I suggest as a beginning that membership of Toc H means living as though the Kingdom of God had already come in a world which is very unlike the Kingdom of God."

It is a plain statement of fact that Toc H sets this phrase 'the Kingdom of God' at the very centre of its aim and purpose. The Main Resolution speaks about "the setting up of His Kingdom upon Earth;" the Fourth Point of the Compass, in its earlier form, reads "The Kingdom of God: To spread the Gospel without preaching it;" while every time we use the Toc H prayer we pray that "we may work for Thy Kingdom in the wills of men."

What is the Kingdom of God?

Unlike 20th century man, the contemporaries of Jesus would neither have been surprised nor moved to derision by the phrase the 'Kingdom of God.' For them God was a reality. He was no absentee landlord, but a God active in history, in the lives of men and nations. But their very familiarity with the idea was one of the reasons why they found it so difficult to understand what Jesus was saying; for a new idea wins readier acceptance than an old one in new dress. Even His most intimate friends took a long time to make His teaching their own. For Jesus broke away from so much of the current conception of the Kingdom of God. To Him it was neither nationalistic nor political, but something infinitely more real, more important, more abiding.

The dominating factor in the thinking of Jesus was that of the Sovereignty of God. No matter what men or nations might say or do, God was King. God could not be dethroned, though allegiance might be denied Him and revolution break out. To speak of a Kingdom is to speak in social terms, but Jesus refused to equate the Kingdom of God with any society, be it national or ecclesiastical. Nevertheless, God's Kingdom *is* something essentially social. It is a community composed of all those who acknowledge, by word and action, the sovereignty of God. The Kingdom is among men because it is in men. God, the King, reigns in the will, the mind and the heart of every man who recognises His sovereignty and tries in loyalty to serve Him. Through allegiance to the King men become citizens of the Kingdom. For them, as for Jesus, God is King in their own individual lives.

So, then, we have at the outset the idea of the Kingdom of God as meaning the enthronement of God as King in the lives of individual men and women, and in the life of the society in which they live.

Is the Kingdom present or in the future ?

In so far as God reigns in men the Kingdom has come. It is something actually present. But there is another sense in which it is present. In the coming of Jesus there came God. Here we have the supreme revelation of a God active in history. The power of the King is made manifest, but it is the power not of dictatorship but of love.

The Kingdom, the reign of God, has actually come, and what men did with the King was to crucify Him. But He was still enthroned, even though His throne was a cross; and He has never been without some to bear Him allegiance. The loyalty which men have given Him has been more than that of lip service, but it has never been perfect and complete. The reign of the King is, therefore, not fully manifested in the life of any man or woman. So we are presented with the paradox that the Kingdom is both present and future; and the paradox is given a keener edge by the bitter fact that in addition to imperfect allegiance there can be total absence of allegiance. It is the recognition of this truth which makes it possible for us to pray

with real meaning 'Thy Kingdom come,' and that 'we may work for Thy Kingdom in the wills of men.'

The Kingdom as a Society

The idea of the Kingdom of God is too big to be confined to any one metaphor or analogy. It is a dynamic conception—and a dynamic fact. So we find Jesus talking of it in terms of the pearl of great price for which a man will sell all that he has in order to possess it. It is like salt, like leaven, like a lamp. It is like the seed which grows secretly. It is the reign of God in the individual life, but it is also something social. For it is both natural and inevitable that the citizens of the Kingdom should come together as a result of their loyalty to the King. Only they must never allow themselves to fall into the snare of believing that the visible society, fellowship or Church is the Kingdom of God. Their membership of the visible society is the result of their having become citizens of the Kingdom, of having acknowledged God as their King. That God should reign in the life of the individual and in the fellowship of His citizens is obvious; but it is equally necessary that He should reign in that wider society into which men are born. There is a true as well as a false totalitarianism, and the true is the reign of God. He alone has the right to our absolute allegiance.

The Kingdom as a Family

There is one other point to be made here; one which is almost startling. The King is a Father. It was of a Father's Kingdom that Jesus talked, and the prayer which He taught men to pray, and in which they were to ask 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, in Earth as it is in Heaven,' was a prayer to 'Our Father.' The King is a Father, and the Kingdom a Family.

The Character of the Citizens

The character of the citizens is made clear on every page of the Gospels, a summary, so to say, being given in the 'Sermon on the Mount.' The true citizen Jesus calls 'Blessed,' that is, 'Happy.' Is it a shock to us that Jesus calls Christians 'the happy ones'? The answer to the question "What should be the character of the citizens of the Kingdom?" can be given with devastating simplicity—their character is to be the character of Jesus.

The Kingdom and Toc H

There are times in history which give to those living in them a profound sense of urgency. The exclamation 'Now or never' seems to them entirely appropriate, and the whole period capable of being summed up in the words "Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision." Such are our own times. We are standing before one of the decisive turning points in history. We are being offered—and they are within our grasp—life or death. One way leads to a philosophy of life which reduces God to an optional extra; to increasing misunderstanding, bitterness and hatred amongst men and nations; to war more total than any we have known; to the final disintegration of civilization and the destruction of mankind. The other way leads to the Kingdom of God.

At no time has it been legitimate for the Christian to think in terms of the parody of the well-known hymn:—

" Sit down, O men of God,
His Kingdom He will bring
Whenever it please *Him*;
You need not do a thing!"

Citizenship of the Kingdom is, indeed, God's gift, but He gives it only to those who want it.

Let us be disturbingly honest with ourselves. Do we really want the Kingdom of God, or are we just prattling about it? For to want it means to want something which is revolutionary in its power. To pray 'Thy Kingdom come' is to ask God, and none less than God, to enter into the life of men and society. That is a courageous petition, for God's coming will inevitably shatter many of our preconceived ideas; it will make us ask whether we are rendering to Caesar those things which are God's; it will shake, to their very foundations, our personal and corporate life. Are we big enough to want this?

If we are in earnest certain things will follow. We shall find ourselves thinking harder than we have ever thought before. It will require all our resolution and power of concentration, and more than likely we shall find it a painful process, for in many ways the twentieth century encourages us to be superficial. The idea of the Kingdom of God meant something to the disciples of Jesus, but what does it mean to us? In the light of Christ's teaching how stand individual life and human society? What is the truth about Toc H in 1947, and of our own Branch in

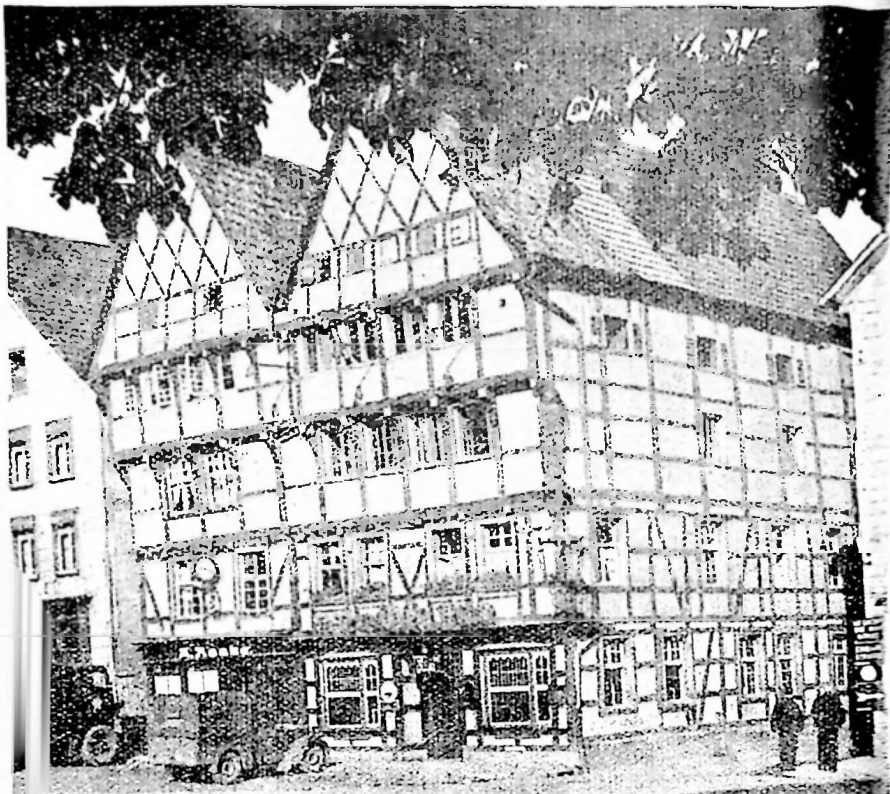
particular? These are no academic questions, neither need we be theologians to answer them. What is required of each of us is that we have such a knowledge of ourselves, of our Branch, of the community in which we live, of Society as a whole that we are able to ask the right questions, and such a knowledge of the Gospels that the answers we give are Christian answers.

Fortunately, no man is asked to do this thinking entirely on his own. On the contrary, much of it will be done in company with those who, like himself, are seeking the Kingdom of God. What the reign of God really means is far too big for any one mind to comprehend. We need the contributions which can be made by the saint, the poet, the mystic, the economist, the teacher, the craftsman, the lorry-driver—in short the contribution of Everyman. With their aid we shall begin to see more clearly what the reign of God means in politics, in industry, in schools, in the Borough Council, in the life of the town and the village. And as a result of this knowledge we shall find what it is that Toc H as a whole, and our own Branch in particular, ought to be doing.

“The Kingdom of God: to spread the Gospel without preaching it”—this, in all conscience is true; but it is only half the truth. For on every one of us is laid the charge of being able ‘to give a reason for the hope that is in us.’ It is profoundly true that the only satisfactory answer to the question “What is Toc H?” is “Come and See.” (Does that sometimes make us frightened?) But there are times when we can best meet the needs of men by a reasoned explanation of that for which Toc H stands. It stands for nothing less than the Kingdom of God itself. The values of Toc H, if it is to be a creative force for good in the world, have to be the values of the King; throughout its whole life, its thinking, praying and doing, the King’s writ must run. If action without thought is dangerous, thought without action is futile. The thoughts and the actions must be the vivid reflection of the thoughts and actions of the King.

Toc H is not, and never can be, the Kingdom of God. But when men look at Toc H they ought to be able to say “Here is Jesus Christ alive and at work. Now we can see a little of what the Kingdom of God must really be like.”

JOHN DURHAM.



*Joe H. Services Club
Soest, B.A.O.R.*

This Club Closed last October.

Photo: Ben M.G.

IN GERMANY NOW

I. The Background

In November the Editor was invited by the Commissioner of Toc H in the B.A.O.R. to pay a visit in order that he might present his readers with some picture of the conditions there compared with those he saw a year ago. The impressions of a tour of over 2,000 miles by car in three weeks crowd so thick on him that only a few can be recorded here. This month's instalment deals with the varied background. In an article next month an attempt will be made to picture what may be called the foreground—the needs of German youth and the small part Toc H may play in helping to meet them.

IN the centre of stricken Düsseldorf on the Rhine the Union Jack flies before a huge building, the Headquarters of Military Government in Lower Rhine/Westphalia. Ben Miles and I parked our mud-splashed little 'Volkswagen' (Hitler's famous 'People's Car,' a wonderful £160-worth of ingenuity) and went inside, up the wide stair-case and into the Information Room. This lofty hall, decorated in the grand manner of German public buildings, houses an exhibition which in its beautiful lay-out even rivals London's 'Britain Can Make It.' Round the walls and on tall screens every aspect of local life leaps to the eye out of large diagrams, beautifully drawn and illustrated in colour: we watched a German artist completing one with the latest information. The condition of every main industry, the position of public monuments, the tragic curves of disease, the reconstruction of school and university life (with specimens of the makeshift text-books), the progress of housing in this waste of ruins, the revival of transport, of church life, of the arts—all these and more are vividly shown in maps and colours and figures. Every employee of the Control Commission (C.C.G.) is urged to pay a weekly visit to this fascinating and imposing monument to the enormous havoc of war and the very remarkable efforts of our Military Government to restore it.

The experiences of an hour before sent me to the corner labelled 'Rations.' On a shelf lay coloured plaster models of each item of a week's rations on the official scale—the little cube of meat, the single mouthful of cheese, the one herring, the small cauliflower, the bottle of skim milk, and so on. Above was the latest table of *weekly* rations per person for the monthly period

(then two days begun), November 11 to December 8. I copied it in my note-book, as follows:—

Potatoes	2,500	grammes	worth	1,624	calories
Bread	2,500	"	"	6,125	"
" Nahrungsmittel "	375	"	"	1,232	"
Meat	125	"	"	196	"
Fish	150	"	"	203	"
Fat	50	"	"	357	"
Sugar	187.5	"	"	749	"
Cheese	15.62	"	"	35	"
Vegetables	500	"	"	77	"
Coffee Substitute	31.25	"	"	—	"
Skim Milk	875	ccm.	"	301	"

This Totals 10,899 calories per week, or 1,557 per day.

The authorities had kept their promise to raise the calorie-value of the Ruhr worker's daily food from 1,000 or 1,200 to 1,550. Well and good. Until you try to work on it—and if you get it. A fortnight earlier Mr. Victor Gollancz had been over the same ground and had found cause to dispute the official figures. Mr. Hynd, High Commissioner of C.C.G., had in his turn challenged Mr. Gollancz's findings in the House of Commons. Mr. Gollancz replied in a long letter to the *Times* of November 29 and has followed it up with a series of articles in the *Manchester Guardian* and in a book about to appear, *In Darkest Germany*. In the *Times*, for instance, he wrote:

"On arriving in the Ruhr (October 27) I visited houses and schools, and was horrified at what I found. Many were living, the day I visited them, on 400 calories, the diet being a cup of milkless 'coffee' for breakfast, potatoes with cabbage for lunch, and the same in the evening, bread being entirely absent. In a class of 41 children 23 had had nothing to eat till the school meal of half a litre of soup at 12.30."

He was allowed to investigate at the food offices in various Ruhr towns, and found that in Düsseldorf, for instance, "the deficiency of flour for bread was about 50 per cent." I talked with an extremely anxious British officer, concerned with the feeding of Düsseldorf (he had been one of Mr. Gollancz's guides), and with the German Medical Officer of Health about the hundreds in the town dying weekly of 'hunger oedema' and the tragic rise of 'T.B.' These men were convinced that Mr. Gollancz's findings would be substantiated in the face of any official diagrams. As we talked I wished that some worker in America, holding up the food-ships while he struck for extra weight in his heavy wage-pocket, had been by my side. Many

times that day I longed to take some British housewife who grumbles overmuch, into the queues, homes and shops I saw.

Where People live

Imagine a large hotel standing intact in surrounding acres of tangled ruins and rubble. It is four storeys high and has two more underground. It is no ordinary hotel, but a gigantic, dirty-grey concrete cube, with a doorway but not a single window opening. It is a fortress impregnable to the 'block-buster,' one of a number to be seen in every ruined city of Germany. They call it the 'Bunker.'

In the Bunkers of Düsseldorf live to-day 2,600 people without prospect of any other home this winter or for a long time to come. These citizens are, on the whole, better off than 9,000 people in Düsseldorf (in Hamburg, they say, 77,000), who live in cellars under the ruins, for Bunkers are dry, cellars are not. In one typical cellar (visited by my hosts of the splendid Red Cross team) six people tonight will cook their soup or potatoes and five will go to bed—grandfather and grandmother in one bed, and mother (with a chronic heart and the early onset of tuberculosis) sharing the other bed with her two children; the father, a diabetic, will sleep outside wherever he can lie down, for there is not room for more than two beds in a room where six people must cook, wash and live. This is no exceptional case; I heard of others no better.

The 'housing shortage' in Düsseldorf, which has a normal population of 400,000, is constantly aggravated by the influx of refugees. A fortnight before my visit 965,000 German evacuees had been turned out of the American Zone into ours, to make room for a wave of another million expelled from Poland and the Russian Zone. Of these, 87,000 had reached Düsseldorf alone, clamouring to be taken under cover. One train, filled mainly with old women and small children, stood ten days in the station and could not be unloaded. A deputation of these women had come to the British officer to whom I was speaking and begged to be sent back to Bavaria (U.S.A. Zone) where they had a roof and belongings, but it could not be done. Despairing people on the move are a commonplace in Europe now.

The Bishop of London (who was in Germany during my visit) is no doubt justified in writing that "compared with the

vast problems created by the general destruction of houses, and the influx of refugees and displaced persons, the difficulty caused by the arrival of British wives and families is almost infinitesimal." (*Sunday Times*, 8.12.46). To be or not to be a B.A.O.R. wife in Germany is a question which has very strong arguments on both sides; it has been much debated in the press and I do not propose to go into it. But on the spot the difficulty does *not* look "almost infinitesimal". In a town where some 2,000 Germans, mostly women and children, have had to give place to 300 of their British opposite numbers, take one quite ordinary case in which a British officer and his wife are installed in a German house of seven rooms; probably four families have to get out at short notice, leaving all their furniture behind for the use of the incoming tenants. Where are they to go? Bunker or cellar perhaps. Take the case of a street of 32 small workmen's houses in Düsseldorf, with three families crowded into each, which was requisitioned for the use of one regiment: a British officer fought the case and after six months succeeded in getting all except thirteen houses de-requisitioned. But what have been the consequences, in terms of sheer human misery, in the meantime?

As the harsh winter descends, with the prospects of food, and even more of fuel, precariously balanced from day to day, the authorities on the spot make no bones about it that they are expecting "trouble." For there is a bitterness which may seek violent outlet. If it does, my informants all believed that British families would be target No. 1. It is not likely that a population so physically enfeebled could put up much active show, but it is no secret that orders are out designed to cope with it. The existence of these seems to have been denied at home, but I saw them for myself.

To think of all housing in Germany in these terms would, of course, be false. The great cities like Berlin or Cologne or Hanover, and many towns like Paderborn, are scenes of ghastly ruin, but some towns and most villages are untouched or but little blasted. Life here is very hard but tolerable. Even in the devastated Ruhr I spent an hour in the home of a miner at Recklinghausen, whose conditions were pretty comfortable. The blasted windows and roof had been repaired, his furniture

was intact. Coal, as everyone knows, is the foundation of German industrial recovery, and the miner receives rations on the highest scale of all. Our friend insisted on us eating some of his best food, set out, party-fashion, on a clean table-cloth and accompanied by powerful *schnaps*. The little flat was very warm, for Ruhr miners now work extra voluntary shifts on Sundays to get coal for their families. His only real grouse seemed to be that (while he was no Communist, he said) he stood in with his mates against the German 'bosses' set over them by the Allied Coal Commission—not local men but "chaps from Nuremberg and such-like." The miners were convinced that part of their Sunday effort went into the black market and the profits into these men's pockets. I have no means of judging whether this is true, or whether it was a political 'stunt' or an instance of the German's chronic tendency to pull other Germans to pieces. A bit of all three probably.

I am, of course, aware that I am but scratching the surface of things after a two days' visit to one town, not the largest or quite the worst. Those who want a fuller picture should not fail to read at once a pamphlet (*An Urgent Message from Germany*, Pilot Press. 9d.) in which Lord Beveridge puts together the material of articles he wrote in the *Times* and other papers and a broadcast he made on his return from a visit to Germany last August. Probably more than anyone else, he helped to rouse the mind and conscience of this country to conditions which had long existed.

No more now on the question in general. Statistics are kittle-cattle, they turn and rend you. I have no head for figures, but I can read human faces. Take a glance at some of these.

In the Bunker

Inside, the cavernous concrete passages of the Bunker are dimly lit, for the electric lamps are 25-candle-power (only two bulb factories are working in the British Zone) and are apt to be stolen to exchange against extra food. There is no extra food whatever in the shops beyond rations, and women stand longer than they do at home and faint much more often in the queues to get it: the black market is expensive—it eats up electric bulbs. The Bunker, having no windows to open, is air-conditioned, but two of the four overworked motors for

this had broken down the day I was there. So the air, if warmish, was stuffy and smelt stale with cookery and human sweat. In Italy or in an English slum the atmosphere would be insupportable, but the Germans, for all their lack of anything we should call soap, are cleaner than we.

I stepped into one 'home,' a room about 10 ft. by 6, its grey concrete walls unrelieved by any paint or picture. The mother was ironing children's clothes neatly; two solemn little children clung to my coat; a lifted blanket revealed the baby, asleep on a shelf. Could I get her back anyhow to Solingen? She had lost all trace of her husband, probably he was dead or, what is almost the same thing, a prisoner in Russia. But back in Solingen, the steel town, heavily bombed, where she belonged, there would still be friends, she thought. I shook my head and talked with her for a few minutes. But she returned to her one hope—"Solingen?" I shook my head again and left her, bent over her ironing. No hope was in her face.

At School

Next morning I entered another Bunker, the Rath. It stands next to the battered shell of a very large elementary school, and it was the schoolchildren I was now visiting. In rooms on different floors of the Bunker 820 children are taught every day, in two shifts, by fifteen most devoted teachers. I stepped into a 'classroom', a concrete cavern into which seventy desks were crammed. Just over forty small boys rose to their feet at my entry. They had given up filling the room, because too many boys 'passed out' in the exhausted air, the master told me. He was a quiet, grey-haired man, with a ready smile and gentle ways. He stood at a blackboard, drawing a picturesque map of the Rhine, dressed in a winter overcoat with upturned collar, for, though the air seemed to me stuffy and dank compared with the winter outside, hours of teaching on an empty stomach is cold work. Behind his blackboard hung a large wall-map of Germany; facing it on the further wall of the room was the only other 'decoration', a plain wooden cross, about 5 feet high—fit symbols enough. "The boys who live in the Bunker, stand up!", he said briskly. Half the class were on their feet and I looked at them: you could have picked them out by

their colourless faces and the dark shadows under eyes. "Heinzi, come here," the master said, and a tiny boy, blushing very pink, came up to me. "His shoes hurt his feet", the master went on, "There are so many like that; we try our best." I examined a pair of home-made wooden soles tied to the boys' feet with string, and spoke to the little lad for a minute. "When you get home," said an English schoolmaster, visiting Germany, to the Bishop of London, "Do talk about shoes. Shoes are priority No. 1. These children won't be able to go to school at all this winter if they don't get shoes."

Then I picked on a small boy in the front who showed me with great pride the drawing he had just done in coloured chalk of a yellow wagtail. It is doubtful if he had ever seen one, but he had a packet of what looked like cigarette-cards to copy. "And now where's *Rotkehlchen*, robin?", I asked. He hunted eagerly through his exercise book till he found it. I shook hands with the master. My "*Auf wiedersehen, Kinder!*" was answered by a smiling chorus. These, at least, did not resent an English invasion of their premises.

At the Party

That afternoon we drove a little way out of Düsseldorf in a Red Cross car to the ancestral home of the von Spee family. At the heart of a beautiful, neglected park, standing in the gorgeous livery of late Autumn, the Schloss opened its doors to us. This great house had been requisitioned as a billet by a dozen British officers, but they were 'eased' out of it and it now houses parties of 40 Bunker children; when the beds can be found its complement will be 120. These parties, alternately of boys and girls, spend ten days there for much-needed rehabilitation. They are tended and taught by Catholic sisters, a splendid little team of high-hearted, hard-working women.

This was the "breaking-up party" of one such group of little girls, and it was an afternoon of sheer joy. We had the seats of honour in a small audience, while the forty children danced and sang to us, in home-made costumes, and acted a fairy-tale play of the Proud Princess and the Prince turned swine-herd. The sister who had coached them, a tall woman with a

strikingly beautiful face, stood in the corner in her black and white habit and directed operations. The gaiety of the three little girls who introduced themselves as Schnickel, Schnackel and Schnuckel, and the lovely play will long stick in the mind. At the end I made a little speech on behalf of us all. When I said, "Dear Children, it was worth coming all the way from England for your party," one little girl said "Ooh!" and the rest, after an incredulous pause, clapped loudly.

Then we had 'tea' (it was some sort of cocoa) with the sisters among the grave family portraits upstairs. I found myself talking to the German Medical Officer of Health, and sitting next to a very old lady in German Red Cross uniform—the widow of that Admiral von Spee who went down at the Falkland Islands in 1914 and gave his name to the battleship scuttled on the River Plate in 1940. As we drove away, the children, leaving their own party tea, crowded to the windows to wave and cheer. They seemed less conscious than we that tomorrow they must return to their concrete hideouts for the long winter, there to lose again their blooming cheeks.

In the Country

Most of our business lay in cities and towns, but our long journeys—one day of fourteen hours—were, of course, through the countryside. The picture of the country must be set, in contrast, against the 'black country' of the Ruhr and the black spots like Düsseldorf. The rolling hills of Westphalia, crowned with russet woods of beech or the dark ranks of splendid pine which house the roebuck and wild boar and the characters of German fairy-tale, are most beautiful. And as we drove deep into Bavaria we were among scenery more magnificent, the higher hills, the deeper forest, transformed one morning into its own fairyland by freshly-fallen snow. Some of the roads are precipitous, and where children were out with their toboggans we had a couple of spectacular skids but came to no harm.

Most of the villages and little towns, too, are beautiful, almost absurdly 'typical,' like picture post-cards. There are plenty of houses like the one at Soest, which forms our frontispiece. In these places life, as seen from a passing car, looks normal.

Men and women go about their work, the smith or carpenter or drover or housewife is busy, the children in bright woollen caps, with the traditional *Tornister* (sachel) on their backs, play about on their way home from school. In the fields women stoop over the sugar-beet and men drive the furrow with a lean horse and an ox yoked together to the plough. Chickens scuttle from the wheels of the car, a procession of geese holds it up; there are a few black and white Friesian cattle in the orchard now and again.

The Germans are good gardeners, but not "everything in the garden is lovely" now. Inevitably the animals are few and the soil, after the years when fertilisers had to give way to munitions, is in poor shape for the yield which is required of it now as never before. Farming methods in Germany are, on the whole, more old-fashioned than ours. It is certainly true there, as it is in our country and in every European land, that the countryman in war-time and post-war is a lot better fed than the townsman. The character of the peasant in most countries is accounted selfish—and the Germans as a race are, on the whole, more selfish than we, especially when they are 'up against it.' Few farmers near the crowded area where people need food most have delivered 50 per cent. of their expected quota. They hoard the rest to barter against cigarettes, spirits and other rarities got from British personnel—a deep evil which is hard to check. But these country people know that they are working, early and late, against the fate of famine which threatens their nation: their own sense and the Allied authorities tell them that without any compromise. Many of them work to the limits of their present powers, but they do not work with peace of mind, much less with joy.

Saturdays and Sundays see the invasion of the country by the '*Hamsters*,' the folk from the nearest town who trek far into the country to barter whatever they possess for what food they can get. You see whole family parties carrying sacks and suitcases, one member dragging the little wooden go-cart which is a usual piece of household equipment. After dark they are still on the road home, bowed under a sack of potatoes or greens, towing the go-cart piled with branches for fuel. This is exhausting, disappointing work in which hard bargains are

driven. When I supped with German friends at Göttingen we sat down to a meal which consisted of a plate of plain boiled potatoes between four and a rare dish of peas—the housewife, who worked in an office all day, was proud of that because she had worked for a farmer at the weekend and this was her wages. When we broke in upon a working couple in Berlin, I apologised for interrupting their evening meal. “Never mind,” said the sick-looking wife, as she led us to the sofa, the seat of honour in a German house, “it isn’t worth eating”—and indeed the mess of boiled swedes, somehow collected, didn’t look appetising. In the shattered centre of Hanover I watched a gang of women shifting debris with long shovels—as slowly as I have seen some well-paid bomb-damage parties do it in London. Unlike those, they had no relays of tea and no good supper to look forward to. They earn extra rations by this work, which they have not the bare strength to do well. As I talked to a young German who had been out after fuel that day, he said, “I felt humiliated. After six years in the Army I ought to be a fit man, but this afternoon I found I could not lift logs which as a boy-scout (*Pfadfinder*) of sixteen I should have tossed about for fun.”

The small quantity, poor quality and sheer monotony of German food is the first inescapable feature of the background today. Apart from actual starvation, which *does* occur, no one feels fit for physical, almost less for mental, work. This must never be forgotten by those who accuse German politics of bitterness, German churches of lassitude, German men and women of lacking initiative. These things would all be characteristic at the best of times, but they are immensely aggravated by minimum rations. Hungry people are prone to be neither reasonable nor effective. Perhaps the surprise is that the Germans are as much of both as they are today.

In Dock

I have said so little, and there is only room for one more glimpse. Harburg is a considerable town, a few miles south of Hamburg, which was our destination one night. In Harburg we asked a most friendly young German policeman (trained by our own police, they have no ‘Prussian’ manners now) the

way to the *Schwerkriegsbeschädigtenheim*—a mouthful for the Home-for-Badly-War-Disabled-Men. We were there five minutes later, talking to Brother Douglas, the Prior of the Anglican Society of St. Francis, an old friend of Toc H and a still older friend of mine. He had exchanged his Franciscan habit for the uniform of the Y.M.C.A., with which he has served at home and abroad throughout the war. We were unhappy to find him in the very act of starting for home on compassionate leave; his sister was dying. He chose some months ago to move into the Home, installing his camp-bed in a tiny room at the back of the men's bath-house, from which, as we entered, came the laughter and loud singing of legless men under the showers. We said a regretful goodbye to Brother Douglas and then went out to visit some of the men, with the excellent German Warden, who lives in half a Nissen hut with his wife, as our guide.

The camp of Nissen huts stands on the exposed slope of a hill. It is the home of 400 men, all amputation cases, many double amputations. Very many of them have nowhere to go, for their homes are in the Russian Zone and the fate of their families unknown. In another part of Harburg is a similar home for 400 men, in another a home for men blinded in the war. These are some of the comrades of Germany's 6,000,000 dead. The nation consists now 70 per cent. of women.

We knocked at the door of hut after hut and were always welcomed. Half a dozen men lived in each, comfortable enough with a stove in the centre and their beds covering nearly all the floor space. Some sat or lay, silent and brooding, legless or armless, on their beds, but most of them talked freely and laughed almost gaily, as we handed them cigarettes and chatted with them. Many of them were very busy on their beds or on the one table for which there was room, for Brother Douglas (their faces kindled when his name was spoken) has brought them both the comfort of the Christian Gospel and something to do—the simple crafts which for years he has taught his 'brothers' from English casual wards and doss-houses at his Priory in Dorset. So we found men weaving patterned scarves out of harsh wool on primitive 'looms' attached to the head

of their beds, or making really fine baskets out of plaited string, dyeing it themselves with red or black ink. One man would trot out proudly the charming toys he was carving from scraps of wood, another the 'soft' toys of wool and cloth and leather, Christmas presents for the War Orphans Home across the town. A group laughed when I queried their "cookery": they were boiling an old fishing net in a saucepan on the stove to get the smell out before they wove it into something handy. In one hut sat the shoe maker, sewing children's shoes made of old German uniforms, with soles of plaited string, on a home-made last—pitiful things for winter rain and snow but better than nothing. He was nearly out of thread and I promised, by hook or crook, to renew his stock next day: I kept my promise, thanks to the Y.W.C.A. in Hamburg. Busy these men were, happy still to be useful.

In one hut a youngster, with his left arm off at the shoulder, took the cigarette I offered him between two gigantic hairy fingers of his right. I kept looking at these fingers until the Warden asked him to show us what they were. His right hand was gone at the wrist, and the surgeons had separated the two bones of the forearm, radius and ulna, from wrist to elbow, and provided them with finger nerves so that they opened and closed stiffly. With great pride he then fetched his tools to show us, a bent fork with brass rings soldered to the haft and fitting round his 'fingers' so that he could feed himself, and various triangular blocks of wood which he could grip firmly; one wielded his safety razor, another his comb, a third, bored with a hole, held his fountain pen. He laughed at our astonishment as he put these things into action.

Outside one of the huts sat a man, legless from the hips, in a self-propelling chair, a young man, looking desperately ill. But he smoked and talked very cheerfully, while a young German girl stood by his side. They had a momentous secret: "We're going to be married on Friday," he said. Then they would move into a scrap of a room in Hamburg and begin life together, though not quite as they had always planned it. "Excuse us," said the girl suddenly, "It's time for us to go." With that, his arms went round her neck, and, planting him on her hip—like a big jar, with one arm round his waist, she

walked off easily into the gathering darkness. In a strange sense they were made one.

Neither war nor the tribulation of peace can any longer touch the dead; their trouble is over. But these, the half-living one would say, what have they to live for? I should have been touched to tears by the tragedy of these men, if I had not been more deeply moved by their courage and their will to happiness. In the camp of Harburg, now under the darkness of a winter night, subdued lights began to gleam from the windows of every hut as we drove away. A far brighter, living light seemed to shine all round us. It came from the lives of many of these maimed men. It uplifted us—but showed us up!

Whither?—and Why?

I have made no attempt to touch on the tangle of economic and political issues, internal and international, in occupied Germany. Where so many experts disagree, the layman can but try to form his own opinion and then keep it to himself. To the ordinary man, whether reading the newspaper at home or working on the spot, it is becoming plain that without political guidance Germany is likely to become a fresh menace to the world's peace, and without a bold economic plan a pensioner costing the British taxpayer even more than last year's £80,000,000, or else relapsing into a gigantic 'slum' at the heart of Europe which will infect all of us with its poison. The remedy is beset with difficulties; the Allies are not united on it, we are not agreed among ourselves. On the spot, and increasingly at home, responsible men are conscious of a cloud on the horizon in both directions—on the west the confusions and delays which seem to reign at Norfolk House in London, the headquarters of the Control Commission; on the east the high politics of Berlin, itself a remote island in a foreign sea, where the Big Four discuss, compromise, await the mind of Moscow, decide, and then bedevil the practical everyday work of the Western Zones with belated orders and changes of front.

I have not said anything about 'war-guilt,' and the long-drawn witch hunt all over Europe which is making many of us weary and ashamed. I shall not begin to discuss the very vexed question of 'denazification'—though I could say much about two intern-

ment camps where I met men going sick and sour, men not only essential to the recovery of German industry, education, medicine and the arts but men of whose innocence, in a very high proportion of cases, their guards are convinced. I am not in a position to deal with the destruction of so much of the material essential to any German recovery and self-support—"that way madness lies." These are matters too high for me—politics on the top level and economics at the most intricate, and all ultimately subject to the timeless machinery of U.N.O.

I am solely concerned with one thing—the human aspect. Every man and woman and especially every Christian, has the fullest right, nay duty, to be concerned with that. The easy way out, of course, is to say "The Germans made the war, which has brought untold suffering to many nations as well as to their own: now they are getting what they deserve." The slogan "Let them stew in their own juice!" sounds final, but it settles nothing. To anyone who has heard a Voice saying "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," these things are blasphemy.

Moreover, we cannot temporize—we have tried plenty of that. It is no excuse to say, however truly, that White Russia or China have suffered even more and that Germany must wait. We are debarred from touching White Russia and hardly one of us can reach unhappy China. Germany is on our doorstep, and it is for us the spiritual, even more than economic or political, battle-field of Europe. Our own children's fate, if we want to take a restricted view, depends a great deal on what happens to children there. But the Christian's view has to be wider than that. Whether we say 'Our Father' or '*Vater Unser*,' we belong to the same Divine family. And love—which does not mean sentimentality but combines kindness with stern discipline—is the Father's way with the family of men. Nothing that has happened will divert God's compassion or should dry up the springs of human help.

BARCLAY BARON.

'7'—OR HYPHEN ?

In reporting a successful concert, a local paper states that the Chairman "revealed that the membership of Toc H in Great Britain numbered 20,730,000." No wonder that the report is headed "Increase in Membership"!



PETER WILLIAM MONIE, C.S.I.

PETER WILLIAM MONIE, *First Hon. Administrator of Toc H*, died suddenly in Edinburgh on December 10, 1946. Born on March 30, 1877. Educated at Irvine Royal Academy, Glasgow University and Balliol College, Oxford. Entered the Indian Civil Service in 1900, Assistant Collector and Assistant Judge, Bombay Presidency; 1905, Under Secretary to the Government of Bombay; 1907, Under Secretary to the Government of India; 1913, acting Collector in Nawabshah Sind; 1915, Secretary to the Government of Bombay; 1916, Municipal Commissioner to the City of Bombay; 1920, Deputy Director of Development in Bombay. 1920, Companion of the Star of India. 1922-1935, Hon. Administrator of Toc H.; 1936, Ordained, Curate of Glasgow Cathedral; 1937, Rector of Old St. Paul's Church, Edinburgh.

'PETER'—WITH THANKSGIVING

PETER'S passing will move a whole generation of older members to proud thanksgiving for the life they knew, and stir in some of them most precious and private memories. The bare facts of his career, and a portrait of him at the time he left the full-time service of Toc H, appear on the previous page.

Tubby spoke truth the day after Peter's death when, in giving the news to an audience in London celebrating the Birthday of Talbot House on December 11, he called him "the architect of Toc H." In 1922 we needed a man and found him ready. For Peter took up the reins at the moment when Toc H received its Royal Charter, lit its first Lamps of Maintenance at its first Festival and stepped as an organised movement into public life. The Charter itself was not his doing; he had to accept it and make it work. And his first act was characteristic and decisive for the future of Toc H. On the day after the Charter was granted he amended the hesitancy he detected in it about the most fundamental fact of Toc H—that it was founded on the rock of the Christian faith. He drew up the *Main Resolution* and put it to the Birthday Conference, which solemnly passed it. On this foundation Peter based all his architecture. He had complete faith in the building because he foresaw it at every stage in this light and understood it. All this he explained, in 1926, in a series of articles in this JOURNAL, reprinted as *Toc H under Weigh*, a book which will not be superseded as long as our family remains true to its vision.

Peter was a skilled architect. He had learnt in the hard school of the I.C.S., from which he retired before his time—because he saw work he judged even bigger, the administration of a new, almost unknown, movement among men. The organisation of Areas, then of Districts, the constitutions for Toc H Overseas, followed in due order from his mind and hand. He erected the framework on which we have built Toc H ever since.

Of Peter the man it is hard to speak. His devotion to duty, in constant ill-health, his understanding and kindness under a rather stern mask, above all the humility in which he lived and served us all, because he served Our Lord—these were his marks to us who knew him. We trusted him and we loved him.

THE ELDER BRETHREN

BIRCH.—On November 11, W. R. BIRCH, a member of Stoke-on-Trent Group. Elected 1924.

BISHOP.—On October 29, MAURICE WATKINS BISHOP ('Bish'), aged 69, Vice-Chairman of Worthing Branch. Elected 25.6.'35.

BOWES.—On November 9, G. BRIMLEY BOWES, T.D., Foundation Member (*see notice below*).

JENNINGS.—Killed in a street accident on November 1, CHARLES WALTER JENNINGS, a member of Acton Branch. Elected 19.10.'36.

LONG.—On November 18, F. W. LONG ('Pop'), aged 74, a member of North Erington Group (Leicester). Elected 22.1.'45.

MILES.—On October 27, OLIVER MILES, a member of Rugeley Group (Staffs). Elected 21.12.'34

MONIE.—On November 10, Rev. PETER WILLIAM MONIE, First Hon. Administrator of Toc H. Elected 1.7.'20. (*See notice above*).

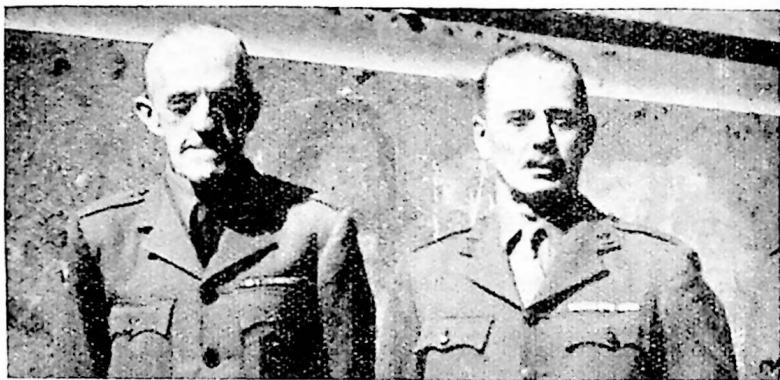
RATCLIFFE.—On November 22, WALLACE RATCLIFFE, a member of Faversham Branch. Elected 7.2.'40.

ROMANES.—In mid-November, AGNES ROMANES, a woman Foundation member and a generous supporter for many years.

RUDD.—FRED V. RUDD ('Rudder'), a member of Norwich Branch. Elected 21.12.'25.

In Memoriam: G. Brimley Bowes

Major Bowes was a Foundation member, an early figure in Talbot House, Poperinghe, where, after long Territorial and active regimental service, he was stationed. In 1917 he was Chairman of the committee, consisting of all ranks, which helped Tubby to run the Old House—a job which needed tact, a sense of humour and a lively readiness "to leap with joy to any task for others." After the Armistice he returned to his old profession, the management of the well-known bookshop of Bowes & Bowes in the centre of Cambridge. Up to his retirement he was an active member of Cambridge Branch. His health had been poor, for some time, but Cambridge saw him as lately as V-Day, gallantly leading the parade of the 'Old Contemptibles' through the streets. Thus passes a faithful member, a man of great charm and a link with the early history of Toc H.



THREE MEN

LAKO (W. J. LAKE LAKE), who is seen on the right of the picture, taken recently in Palestine, has just handed over his office as Hon. Administrator of Toc H to his successor. He was the third in a line of men remarkable for different gifts, with which they have enriched the life of the whole family. Peter Monie, the first (1922-1935), has just joined the Elder Brethren (see p. 21); the second, Hubert Secretan, is still a member of the Central Executive.

Lako learned his Toc H in London in the very early days. Returning to South America, he founded it in the Argentine in 1923, and inspired its beginning in Brazil, in Uruguay and in Chile. On his firm foundation of faith, fellowship and work Toc H in South America has disowned every discouragement. Retiring from business, he came home to enjoy leisure in England—and ran into the war instead. Without hesitation he took over the very heavy responsibilities of administering Toc H in wartime, which Hubert had had to lay down. The ability, devotion and success of Lako's six years' work in directing our widespread War Services will never be forgotten in the history of Toc H. And he has laid the foundations, with the Central Executive, of our post-war development. We add no more now—for he is to continue to serve us in another capacity—except to say, with all our hearts, "Thank you, Lako, and God bless you!"

ARTHUR SERVANTE stands with Lako on the left of the picture. On his way home from three very busy years of 'Toc H War Services work in the Far East, he got off the ship at Cairo to join Lako in a visit to Palestine, where after a short leave at home, he is to take up duty as our Commissioner. 'Uncle Arthur,' as all ranks from the General downward knew him, was reckoned part of the 25th Division. From India he went with them to the Arakan coast, where he ran the rest camp at Elephant Point, then the Club at Maungdaw, both nearer the fighting line than any clubs had gone before. As the Division advanced through the Burma jungle, Arthur became 'mobile'; his lorries and equipment and especially himself moved everywhere with them—across the Irawaddy and, at the end, in the Malay landing. The 25th Division is disbanded, but its men won't forget 'Uncle Arthur.' They know how well he won the M.B.E., recently awarded, on which we all now congratulate him.

HAROLD HOWE, our new Administrator, provides the third subject for a portrait this month. Retiring from the Headmastership of Keswick School, he has moved to Kent and takes up his arduous job at Headquarters on January 1. His fellow-members in Lakeland have long known him as a working Branch member and a notable figure on their Area Executive. The rest of us very soon *will* know him: we will only say, here and now, that he is a very 'knowable' man. So here is every good wish to him—and the backing of us all!



CONGRATULATIONS

O.B.E.: REV. ALAN S. GILES, for services in a Far East P.O.W. Camp.

M.B.E.: GEORGE WESTBROOK, for 'Toc H service in India and with 36 Div. in S.E.A.C.

B.E.M.: ROBERT J. IRVING (Kimberworth Branch) for services in the R.A.F.

THE FAMILY PURSE—II.

IN the December JOURNAL we promised more information about the accounts for the year ended 31st October, 1946. Space does not permit publication of the actual accounts in this JOURNAL, and we must therefore deal with the salient points as clearly as we can, quoting figures to the nearest £100 for simplification.

Expenditure

The total Expenditure for the year is £50,100, an increase of £17,200 over the previous year, brought about mainly by an increase in Staff. During the war years the Staff spent a great deal of their time and energies on work for H.M. Forces, and the War Services Fund made annual contributions to cover the cost involved. With the cessation of hostilities and the closing down of Services Clubs in this Country, the Staff spent less time on this kind of work during the past year, and devoted more of their energies to the task of strengthening Toc H Branches and Groups: consequently the contribution from the Services Fund to cover the cost of Services work during the year has dropped from £9,400 in 1945 to £5,800 in 1946. This contribution reduces the gross expenditure of £50,100 to a net expenditure of £44,300 for the year.

Income

The Income for the year has increased by £8,900 from £22,700 in 1945 to £31,600. Analysis of the figures shows that members have contributed £14,500, being 46% of the total income, that a further £7,500 (approximately 23% of the total income) has come from other sources within the Family, mainly from investments, and that Toc H Builders, other than Member Builders, have subscribed £4,900 (16% of the total income.) These figures show that the Family has contributed 85% of the total income for the year, the balance of 15% being received in donations from various sources.

The increase in income is a most encouraging sign, more particularly so when it is further analysed. Out of a total of 955 Units, 640 have made contributions to the Family Purse. A large proportion of the 315 "non-starters" were new Units

or old Units reborn, who will be making their contributions felt in more ways than one during the current year. Again, further analysis shows that the initial extra effort which resulted in an increase over 1945 figures of 86% in Unit Contributions was in fact made by about one third of the total Units. There are good reasons for this; the Hon. Treasurer warned us at the Central Council in April, 1946, that because of the increase in Staff which had then just begun, we should need to double our 1945 income if we were to avoid a deficit for the year. We were left with six months in which to lay our plans, members were returning from the Forces and Units were gradually being strengthened; the brunt of the task, therefore, lay upon the Units which had been able to maintain or build up their strength before the six months period began. There can be no doubt that those Units whose plans did not come to fruition before the end of the financial year will make their contributions during the present year.

Deficit

The Deficit on the year's working is as follows:—

							£
Gross Expenditure	...	...	...	...	...	...	50,100
Deduct Services Fund Contribution	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,800
							<hr/> 44,300
Less : Income for the Year.	...	...	...	...	...	...	31,600
							<hr/> £12,700
Deficit	...	...	...	...	...	...	<hr/><hr/>

Thanksgiving Fund. The Central Finance Committee have decided that the whole of the Members' Thanksgiving Fund totalling £6,900 should be used at once towards the reduction of the year's deficit so that, when this has been done, the accounts show an excess of expenditure over income of £5,800.

Commitments for 1946/47

The Finance Committee has considered the present Staff position, and estimates that the expenditure for the current year will be between £65,000 and £70,000, to which must be added any immediate cost involved in the rebuilding of the

North Aisle of All Hallows, up to an eventual total of £25,000, if required.

Our income for the past year was £31,600; we have no Thanksgiving Fund to fall back upon, nor shall we receive any contribution from the Services Fund this year. We must therefore by our own increased efforts raise our income to £70,000 for the year to ensure a balanced account, apart from All Hallows needs.

We are not despairing, on the contrary we are confident that, given the facts, convinced of the need and determined to respond, our 1,000 Units will produce the necessary income and more, so that the Executive may be enabled to plan for further extensions. J.H.

N.B. *Expenditure for year estimated £70,000. Income for November, 1946. £2,293.*

TOC H WOMEN'S SECTION

It is high time that the family as a whole should know what the officers, staff and members of the Central Executive of Toc H Women's Section look like. So the photograph we are able to reproduce on the opposite page is—in more senses than one—a happy opportunity. The names, from left to right, are:—

Front Row: MRS. ELLISON (Vice-President); MISS KATHLEEN OWEN (Chairman, Central Executive); MISS A. B. S. MACFIE (Founder Pilot); MRS. HORNE (Hon. Treasurer); MRS. EDWARDS (Vice-President); MRS. TWINCH (General Sec.).

Second Row: MISS L. EDWARDS (Central Executive); MISS N. KEELING (Central Executive); MRS. BAINTON (Central Executive); MISS R. ROLF (Western Regional Sec.); MISS M. THOMAS (N.E. & Scotland Regional Sec.); MISS HELEN BENBOW (Australian Organising Sec.); MISS E. TAYLOR (Central Executive); MISS E. PERRIN (H.Q. Sec.); MISS L. PICKERING (Central Executive and Editor of *The Log*).

Third Row: MISS E. LONG (Eastern Regional Sec.); MISS A. WELFORD (Southern Regional Sec.); MISS E. LEE (East Midlands Regional Sec.); MISS E. SPARROW (Central Executive).

Fourth Row: MISS E. POTTER (Overseas Sec.); MISS M. ENDACOTT (Central Executive).

Fifth Row: MISS R. OKELL (Central Executive); MISS J. WELCH (Central Executive); MISS J. BRADY (H.Q. Office); MISS A. PETHERBRIDGE (N.W. Regional Sec.); MISS R. RADFORD (Central Executive).

Back Row: MISS R. COLLINS (Asst. London Regional Sec.); MISS PHYLLIS WOLFE (London Regional Sec.); MISS W. ADAMS (Chief Accountant).



CRUTCHED
FRIARS
HOUSE

42

‘FRIEND AND BROTHER’

SOME months ago the case was brought to the notice of our Branch of an invalid who needed friendship, one Billy. He suffers from creeping paralysis and has no use of his body below the hips. We found him a cheery chap, tied to his invalid chair. Three years ago Billy was given three months to live, but in spite of this “death sentence” he has inspired all who have visited him by his cheerfulness, and courage. Bad health is not Billy’s only burden: he cannot work, has no parents and must rely on an aged couple to do everything for him. By the generosity of Lord Darnley, he lives in a cottage on the Cobham Hall estate.

For years Billy had been interested in Toc H, but he got the idea that it was only a London affair and wondered how he could be in touch with it. We discussed the matter in our Branch and with our District Team, and we all agreed that, though he couldn’t do the usual Toc H jobs, he made up for them by inspiring other people. Our Branch and District Pilots visited him and recommended him for membership.

So on Hallowe’en six of us went out to Cobham Hall to initiate Billy. We found him not so well and in bed instead of sitting in his chair. We therefore initiated him in bed, and it was the most impressive scene I have come upon in Toc H—Billy lying there, amid contraptions by which he pulls himself up (they would thrill Heath Robinson), the golden light of the Lamp and we six standing round. A brief chat of explanation from a member, and then the questions from our Pilot and Billy’s answers. After our Chairman had welcomed him into the family, we took the Ceremony of Light—and whoever it was who coined the phrase “as dim as a Toc H Lamp” ought to have been there. I tell you, the Lamp shone bright that night.

Was it worth making that journey on a cold, dirty night? Remembering Billy’s smile I’ll say it certainly was. POLLY.

....“the world-wide institution of Christian Service known as Toc H, which, between the wars, must have been one of the most effective of all the Church’s instruments of Christian expansion.” From *The Church of England in the Twentieth Century*, Volume I, by Canon Roger Lloyd (Longmans, Green & Co., 1946).

AUSTRALIA COMES OF AGE

AMONG the most memorable pictures which hang in the mental gallery of those who must now call themselves veterans in Toc H is the scene in the Royal Albert Hall, London, on a December night in 1925. The immense building was crammed, tier upon tier, to the top, a true 'family circle' of 8,000 members and friends of Toc H. Branches shouted comic greetings to each other across the wide arena, cheered everyone and everything that appeared on the platform, and shook the roof with singing. The climax came when the long procession of Lamps and banners filed across the floor and filled the background of the stage; when the Patron took his seat in the centre, flanked by Tubby and Pat Leonard, home in the nick of time from their World Tour—their ultimate goal the foundation of Toc H in Australia—and the lighting of the new Lamps began. And the highest moment of this stately ceremony was when Lord Forster, Governor General, knelt before the Patron with his own Lamp, dedicated to the memory of his two sons who had fallen in battle. The parent Lamp of Australia was lit, a tiny golden flame in that vast expanse. It was a true symbol of a small but unquenchable light which was to multiply and grow in a great Continent. Silence fell, as the Hall was darkened, and in the ceremony of Light these thousands remembered their friends of the past, but only in order to dedicate their own lives to the ventures of the future.

And now Australia has celebrated its Twenty-first Birthday. True to the first promise, Toc H Australia has multiplied and grown. Much has happened there, a history of ups and downs, as the story of Toc H must always be. But there has been more up than down—the motto is "Advance Australia!" Past experience, present confidence, future growth—all this was summed up in the Birthday Festival in Melbourne, which was held on October 9-14. It has not been possible to chronicle this memorable event earlier in the JOURNAL, for the records from "down under" take long to reach us. Even now those six days of living fellowship must be compressed into little more than a bald summary. This is compiled from two contributions sent for these pages—a *resumé* of the events by one member and

another's estimate of what they meant, transmitted by John McCreery, hard-working Secretary of the Festival.

Diary of the Festival

Melbourne did the thing properly. Delegates were welcomed in bright spring sunshine. This lasted for a week, and even Melbourne was surprised. The tremendous amount of work which had been put into the arrangements by the Festival Committee was soon realised by the 97 inter-state visitors.

Wednesday, October 9: The Festivities began with the Lord Mayor's reception at 12 noon to all delegates. This was followed by lunch at Victorian Headquarters, known to all Australia as "476."

The theme for the Festival was "The Family", and after lunch the conference opened with a paper by Harold Lewis, the latest recruit to Toc H Staff, on the "Importance of the Open Door in Toc H." Discussion followed which was humorous in many instances, and at times misguided: it would still be being discussed but for the time limit! Suffice it to say that many opinions were changed for the better. The next paper was given by Sib. Elliot on "Extension". Sib has recently been appointed Hon. Area Commissioner of Victoria, and his paper was most constructive and thought-provoking.

We left the conference at 5 p.m. to accept the kind invitation of His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, Sir Edmund Herring, at a late afternoon party at Government House. This was a delightfully informal and happy occasion and left the impression that after all Toc H held some significance in the public mind.

After tea, again served at "476," the Victoria Area entertained the visitors at a Guest Night at which the speaker was that genial friend whom we had all come to love, Padre Gilbert Williams. It was a most spontaneous evening, and we all went off to bed, or rather to our respective domiciles, in good time in order that we might be up and at Church early on the morrow for the Festival Corporate Communion, held at St. Paul's Cathedral and Scots Church.

Thursday, October 10: On this day, a whole-day tour had been arranged for the visitors, to Dandenong Ranges, Fairy Glen, Sassafras and Olinda, and buses soon carried off a carefree crowd of men and women, intent on sharing the Fellowship and thus strengthening and enlarging the Family of Toc H.

At night the Public Guest Night was held at the Athenaeum Theatre. The first part of the programme was selected short pictures, and after an interval His Excellency spoke to the guests. Before doing so he read messages of congratulation from our beloved King, from the Founder Padre, Tubby Clayton, from Lord Gowrie and Sir Leslie Wilson, from the Central Executive and Women's Section and many friends of Australia, separated from us only by land and water.

His Excellency referred to Padre Gilbert Williams as "that travelling ambassador of Toc H from London." He introduced Gilbert, who spoke to the guests, giving them some idea of what Toc H is, how it works and what is its challenge to the world of today. His talk was followed by Grand Light. Arranged on the stage were twenty-six Lamps representative of the whole of Australia, and, after the Forster

Lamp was carried on, His Excellency lit two tapers which were handed to the Australian Commissioner and Australian Secretary who lit the Lamps. It was a most impressive ceremony.

Friday, October 11: On Friday morning the Australian Executive met, but many of the things which came before this august body could not be finalised and therefore were left to be carried on at the Holiday Camp on Saturday evening. In the afternoon the whole of the family left by bus for Geelong, first to be entertained by the Directorate of the Ford Motor Works at afternoon tea, and then to be shown over the works—a case where we took Toc H to the expert, and saw him at his job.

Geelong, not to be out-done by Melbourne, really "turned it on" and entertained us at high tea and later at a Guest Night at Newtown and Chilwell. Gilbert, the speaker, was unrestricted either by time or space and really inspired us all. Newtown and Chilwell will long remember this event, for they were raised to Branch Status and received their Lamp from the hands of Gilbert Williams himself.

At 10 p.m. again we boarded motor coaches and this time headed for Point Lonsdale where the remaining part of the Festival was to take place. This camp, formerly used for Italian P.O.W's and now for children's holidays, has been acquired by Toc H, and was officially opened by Lord Herring on Sunday afternoon. I have said the Festival arrangements were well organised—Point Lonsdale proved it. For when we arrived our suitcases were by our beds, our pyjamas on our pillows and hot water running in the bath-rooms with our tooth brushes hung on the nail. All had been done so quietly, but so efficiently.

Saturday, October 12: The morning was taken up with informal discussion, exploring, photographing and getting to know one another. The formal conference was continued on Saturday afternoon, when Padre Noel Tollhurst spoke to us on the "Importance of the Padre in the Unit"; he was followed by Padre Gilbert Williams speaking to us on "Staff—its Real Position and Significance." The question of Marks was also raised by New South Wales.

The Women's Section, who attended the opening session and the conference in Melbourne, at Point Lonsdale went off to discuss their problems in their own conference.

Before tea, the Australian Council met. Saturday evening was enjoyed by the crowd either at Ocean Grove Unit's Gala Dance, at pictures arranged at the camp, over cards or in quiet talks, but the Australian Executive got down to business at 7.30 p.m. and did not rise till 11.45 p.m. Some momentous changes were made, the benefits of which we hope to see in the future.

Sunday, October 13: It was just another Sunday—but with a difference. For today we were to take part in our Rededication Service.

Corporate Communion was held in the morning and in the afternoon the service of Rededication took place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at Queenscliff, just a little way from the camp. It was indeed a time of rededication. We had heard during the last few days something of what was expected of us, and we were ready to rededicate ourselves to God's service.

Monday, October 14: On Monday morning the camp broke up, and delegates set off for Melbourne by bus and train. After farewells at Melbourne they scattered to the four corners of the Commonwealth, but with the fragrance of the Festival still lingering. N.R.T.

What it all meant

Going, as it did, right to the core of such vital matters as expansion, the 'open door,' the selection of members, the importance of the Padre in a unit, the establishment of Marks in Australia, adult education, publicity, staff, manpower and housing problems, the Coming-of-Age Festival in Melbourne and at Point Lonsdale cannot fail to reflect itself to the benefit of the movement in Australia. Those privileged to attend are confident that it will pay rich dividends in more practical and enthusiastic service, in a better appreciation of the inner meaning of Toc H and its vital truths, in a wider understanding of 'fair-mindedness' and the scrapping of parochialism, in a more intense dedication to the Fourth Point of the Compass—the extension of the Kingdom of God.

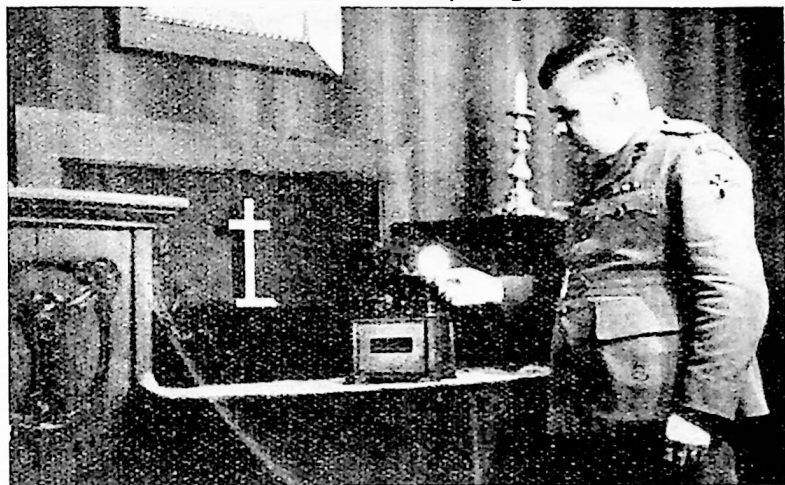
It is very difficult to assess the value of such a Festival, because it had so many facets, each important in its own way, but the result of a *post mortem* must be the conclusion that the possibilities of Toc H are tremendous and that it is the bounden duty of every member to see to it that its vitality is not only maintained but strengthened. Every unit does not make all the same mistakes or have the same problems, and delegates probably benefited from the Festival in different ways. It is the responsibility of all of them to see that the seeds they take back are fertile, that they are not shoved away in a pigeon-hole to moulder. Unless some lessons were learnt from the Festival conference, it was a farce and a waste of money! Actually it was a wonderful manifestation of the real Toc H. It was very well planned, many useful contacts were made, points of view on local and inter-state questions were exchanged, fellowship assumed a new importance in the scheme of things.

Guiding and directing, straightening out kinks and making rough places smooth, and giving generous contribution to the infectiously happy atmosphere was the British Headquarters representative, Padre Gilbert Williams. He was one of the most vital links in the chain, and his series of addresses on various aspects of Toc H were always an inspiration. Although he reached his 60th birthday in Melbourne, Gilbert has been doing the work of two men since he came to Australia; never once has he relaxed from the superlative standard he set at the start.

THIRTY-ONE YEARS OLD

ON December 11, as every member knows, all Toc H remembers the night in Poperinghe in 1915 when Talbot House first opened its doors. We have not had time to hear—and if we heard, we could not print the whole record—of how the family all round the world kept its thirty-first anniversary. Here is a brief account of some outstanding events that night.

In Berlin—and Poperinghe



Paul Webb lights the Lamp in Berlin Services Club

The World Chain of Light, (see p. 39) inaugurated at the Birthday of 1929 by Toc H Australia, has started out in turn from Canada, South Africa, India, New Zealand, several times from the Old House in Flanders itself, from London, Iceland and Jerusalem. In 1946, most fittingly, it began in the Chapel of our Services Club in Berlin, when Padre Paul Webb, Toc H Comissioner in the B.A.O.R., lit the Lamp. The actual Lamp which was used was a symbol of high endeavour, for it was dedicated to the memory of Andrew Irvine, who gave his life in the attempt on Mount Everest in 1924. Presented originally to the Federated Malay States Branch, it was in safe hands before the Japanese occupation and was sent out from home to Germany. Between thirty and forty were present at the

lighting, including representatives of the British and Belgian forces, of the Control Commission, of our friends of Y.M.C.A. and the Church of Scotland, of Toc H and its Women's Section; one man who was present at the opening of Talbot House in 1915 was there. Throughout the next twenty-four hours, while the light travelled round the world, vigil was kept by members and others before the lighted Lamp in Berlin.

The Birthplace itself, Talbot House at Poperinghe, was also furnished with guests that night. Members from Brussels, both men and women, and from Charleroi Branch, gathered with fifteen of our Belgian friends, members of the group of 'Bridge Builders,' who meet every week in the Old House. Pimblott (Brussels) welcomed them, Arthur Lahaye (Poperinghe) spoke to them in French. After the lamp-lighting, they had tea together and spent a delightful guestnight.

London: At the Mansion House

In London the day was celebrated by three events, of which the first had much more than a local significance. This is how it was announced in the November JOURNAL:

"The Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress are inviting a limited number of guests to attend a meeting at the Mansion House at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11. In three brief speeches there will be explained the purposes and the needs of the movement today; more personal introductions over a cup of tea will follow."

Plainly, therefore, this was not just a family gathering—for the family does not need to have "the purposes and needs of the movement" explained to it. It was frankly intended as a shot to be fired from a gun of heavy calibre in the campaign to gain support from well-wishers outside Toc H, and the reaction took us by surprise. Whereas long experience shows that for an afternoon meeting of this kind 15 per cent. acceptances of an invitation are as much as can be expected, the response was more than 40 per cent. In other words more than 1,600 people wanted to get into a hall which is quite full with 800. There was no alternative but to ask hundreds of Toc H members and friends who had accepted to stand down—a great disappointment to them and to those who had organised the meeting. Sincerest apologies are expressed to those whose hopes were thus dashed.

As it was, the hall was crammed to its utmost capacity. Among the audience were more than a hundred Mayors of provincial

cities and towns, wearing their chains of office; they came from as far away as Durham and Penzance. They went away after the meeting, tea with the Lord Mayor and informal talks with Toc H people, encouraged to head the campaign in their own places. That was seed well sown, and it was not the only corner of the field.

The LORD MAYOR, obviously moved by the keenness of the audience he was facing, welcomed his guests and made the object of the meeting plain. The first of the "three brief speeches" was then made by Lieutenant General Sir WILLIAM SLIM, hero of the Burma campaign. Its directness and sincerity impressed everyone. He paid a great tribute to the service of Toc H to the jungle-fighters of S.E.A.C. We hope to print what he said in a future issue.

P. H. B. LYON, Headmaster of Rugby School and a working member of Rugby Branch, followed. If anyone can claim to know youth and its needs and aspirations, he can, and he told us plainly what Toc H has done, and can do, for young men.

Then came HARRY WILLINK, who told the audience of his personal experience—as a Foundation member who first met Tubby on the Ypres battlefield, as one of the first hostellers at Mark I, as first Warden of Mark III, as Chairman of the London Executive and then of the Central Executive itself. He left no doubt as to what Toc H could mean in a man's life. With a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor from TUBBY and DONALD CAMPBELL the meeting ended. Over tea old friendships were renewed and new ones made. Everyone felt that it had been an afternoon well spent.

In Westminster Abbey

Months ago it was suggested in these pages that, where they could, the family should arrange a service of thanksgiving on the Birthday in their own places; in London this was to be held in Westminster Abbey. Again space was a problem: the Abbey only seats 2,000—some had to stand and many had been refused tickets. The form of service was simple and as 'congregational' as could be: in hymns and prayers and responses everyone's voice was able to join. Tubby read the Lesson and led an Act of Praise; the Dean of Westminster, an old friend, preached.

The climax to everyone was uplifting in its beauty—a long procession which wound slowly, singing, from the sanctuary, round the hidden ambulatory behind the altar, down the aisle and up the centre of the nave past the Unknown Warriors Grave and halting at the nave altar, before it returned to the choir and sanctuary again. A cross and two tall lighted candles headed it, followed by the great banners of the Abbey, by the red-cassocked choir, the Abbey clergy and the Dean in gleaming robes, a long file of Toc H padres, Anglican and Free Church, all in black gowns; behind, in steady slow step, marched eighty Toc H men, bearing their banners from London and Home Counties Branches and a few to represent Toc H overseas; a silver banner blazoned with the arms of Ypres brought up the rear. As they moved slowly round they sang “At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.” The choir boys’ voices sang the second, and each alternate, verse:

At his voice creation
Sprang at once to sight,
All the Angel faces,
All the hosts of light . . .

From the long train of lovely colour and movement, now in sight to one part of the congregation and hidden to another, this music rose into the dim vaults overhead and filled the great Church with the voice of thanksgiving.

On its return the procession spread out to fill and surround the sanctuary. Then, as their last act, the standing congregation, led by the Dean, lifted its voice to rededicate itself in the words of the *Main Resolution*—“to strive to listen now and always for the voice of God; to know His Will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly...; to thing fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely.”

As the congregation streamed out into the wet, noisy streets, many a man and woman, old member or new, or those who were our guests for the first time, were talking of the service as an experience they would not forget.

A Link In the Chain

Those in the Abbey congregation who could not get back to their own units in time for the lighting of their own Lamps at 9 o'clock, were invited to be present at a lamp-lighting in Church

House, nearby. Again, space was the problem. The Hoare Memorial Hall and its gallery were crammed, and an overflow gathered in the smaller hall next door. Barkis spoke for a few minutes; Violet Neale, on behalf of Toc H Women's Section, for a few more; Tubby took the platform for ten minutes and gave members the news that Peter Monie—"the architect of Toc H," he truly called him—had joined the Elder Brethren the day before. Pte. Pettifer, 'the Gen.,' came on—as he has done at so many Festivals since the beginning—with the lighted Patron's Lamp in his hands and set it before Tubby; behind him followed the Lamps of three new Branches—Aden, Byculla (India) and Quilmes (Argentina)—which Tubby lit. Then, as the first strokes of Big Ben, not far away, were clearly heard, Stephen Jack spoke Tubby's old lines for the World Chain of Light—

Now let the loving-cup of fire
Be lifted over land and sea;
Now may the faith of friends inspire
Our scattered souls with unity.
For other men's tomorrows, these
Broke from their dreams, made brief their day :
Heirs of their spirit will not please
Themselves, but school themselves to say—
Light!

The hall was darkened. Tubby spoke the words of Remembrance; in the long silence Peter was in many hearts and minds "with proud thanksgiving;" then the words of rededication.

A Broadcast

Later that night a member recorded the impressions of the day in London in a B.B.C. studio, for six transmissions during the next twenty-four hours in a programme which reaches the four corners of the world. Of the final act of the day he said :

"The place was fitting, for in this Hall the Mother of Parliaments held many of its sessions after the House of Commons was destroyed in the 'blitz.' Great decisions had been taken there in wartime, decisions which affected the whole British Commonwealth and the history of the world. Tonight in this place Toc H renewed its deep resolves and rededicated itself to its world-wide task of friendship and unselfish work—in a world full of want, hatred and fear . . .

Once a year, at this Birthday in December, every Toc H unit in the world lights its Lamp at 9 o'clock—by its *own* time. As the earth turns on its axis and darkness falls over one country, one ocean, one continent after another, this lamplighting, as you can imagine for yourself, forms a World Chain of Light . . .

Just try to picture this Chain of Light—as if you were gazing down upon the earth from a helicopter at a great height. The tiny golden flames leap out in the darkness, one by one, and after a few minutes die away. Now they are a thick cluster in the British Isles, now a lonely point or two over the Atlantic—the lights of Toc H in the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service. Then they touch Canada and cross it hour by hour, a necklace of bright beads. At the same time twinkling points are seen crossing South America. Next they appear upon the vast background of the Pacific; in New Zealand, in every State of Australia, in Japan and Malaya and Burma. Then they shine from the North West Frontier of India, down south and into Ceylon. And then they pass across Iraq to Palestine and Egypt, to East and West Africa and, thickly sown, across Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. As the light moves homeward a glow marks Malta and Gibraltar.

The Chain is forged—across the lands where *you* live, across the seas, wherever a few Toc H members are gathered together to keep the Birthday. ‘Follow it, follow the gleam!’” B.B.

A JOB REVIVED

Before the late war one Branch in the West (later joined by others) conceived the idea of doing something for the Showmen, who came round to the town each year with the Annual Fair. They found, on enquiry, that these folk were kept so busy at their trade of entertaining others, that they had no time to look after themselves. The Branch therefore decided that they would organize and run a Showmen's Hut, where food, smokes and recreation should be provided for any showman, or woman, who could manage to snatch a few moments off. The idea proved a great success. Jugs of hot tea were taken round to the various stalls, and cupfuls sold at cost price. In the hut, sandwiches, cakes, &c. could be obtained at once; while if the showmen had time to wait, bacon and eggs or fish and chips could be prepared for them at short notice. Cigarettes were also available.

That was before the war. Present restrictions have cut down what the Showmen's Hut has been able to provide in the way of creature comforts. But, starting again this year, we found that the spirit was still there. Although we could only get hot tea to take round, and that involving some sacrifice on the part of the members responsible, we found that the effort was well worth while. It really helps the showmen and it brings our members in touch with people they would otherwise never meet. Can't Toc H everywhere see that this service is offered?